

OUTGOING MESSAGE

Approved For Release 2004/11/30 : CIA-RDP78S01932A000100210095-1

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ITEM NO: WHH WH-7

DATE: 19 FEB 74

SUBJECT: ISRAELI POLITICS

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ACCORDING TO A REUTER NEWS AGENCY REPORT, PRIME MINISTER MEIR REPORTEDLY HAS SAID THAT SHE WILL NOT ASK PRESIDENT KATZIR FOR AN EXTENSION OF HER MANDATE TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT WHEN IT EXPIRES TOMORROW.

THE DECISION MOST LIKELY REFLECTS HER FEELING THAT THE ALIGNMENT HAS GONE AS FAR AS IT REASONABLY CAN TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF THE NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTY FOR JOINING A NEW CABINET. SHE PROBABLY SEES NO POINT IN PURSUING THE COALITION TALKS FOR ANOTHER 21 DAYS, AS SHE COULD IF SHE ASKED FOR AN EXTENSION.

MRS. MEIR STILL WANTS--AND NEEDS--THE NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTY IN HER CABINET IF THE GOVERNMENT IS TO BE REASONABLY STABLE.

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RELEASING OFFICER

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CLASSIFICATION

REPRODUCTION BY OTHER THAN THE ISSUING OFFICE IS PROHIBITED

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OVER THE WEEKEND, ALIGNMENT NEGOTIATORS APPARENTLY MADE SIGNIFICANT CONCESSIONS TO THE NRP ON THE RELIGIOUS AND THE JORDANIAN WEST BANK TERRITORIAL QUESTIONS. NRP DELAYING TACTICS HAVE NOW, HOWEVER, THREATENED TO POSTPONE ITS FINAL DECISION UNTIL AFTER MRS. MEIR'S CURRENT MANDATE TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT EXPIRES. SHE MAY HOPE THAT HER DECISION WILL NOW FORCE THE NRP TO MAKE UP ITS MIND.

DEFENSE MINISTER DAYAN, MEANWHILE, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS HAD TOLD HIS RAPI FACTION IN THE LABOR ALIGNMENT THAT HE WOULD NOT SERVE IN THE NEXT CABINET BECAUSE OF CRITICISM OF HIM FROM WITHIN THE LABOR PARTY. LARGE ANTI-DAYAN DEMONSTRATIONS REPORTEDLY WERE HELD IN JERUSALEM OVER THE WEEKEND. HIS OPPONENTS HOLD HIM RESPONSIBLE FOR ISRAEL'S ALLEGED UNPREPAREDNESS FOR THE OCTOBER WAR. DAYAN HAS SAID ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THAT HE IS WILLING TO STEP DOWN IF MRS. MEIR WITHDRAWS HER CONFIDENCE IN HIM, BUT IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT WOULD PROMPT SUCH A STATEMENT AT THIS TIME. HIS ROLE IN THE NEXT GOVERNMENT HAS, HOWEVER, BEEN A CONTENTIOUS ISSUE SINCE AT LEAST THE DECEMBER ELECTIONS.

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